

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AID-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 IGA-01

EB-07 AGR-05 OMB-01 CIAE-00 L-02 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02

SS-15 /053 W

----- 107641

O 111232Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH IMMEDIATE

INFO USSAG

SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 697

SECDEF WASHDC

AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC

JCS

CSAF

S E C R E T BANGKOK 2438

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MASS, MILI

SUBJECT: CAMBODIAN AIR LIFT SUPPORT: RICE

REF: PHNOM PENH 2562

1. ON EVENING FEBRUARY 10

GPOMUS MACTHAI AND POMIL COUNSELOR

CALLED ON SUPREME COMMAND CHIEF OF STAFF GEN. KRIANGSAK
CHOMANAN IN CONNECTION WITH BIRD AIR SURGE REQUIREMENTS.

FOLLOWING DISCUSSION OF BIRD AIR SURGE, WITH WHICH
KRIANGSAK IMMEDIATELY AGREED TO COOPERATE, WE ADDRESSED
SUBJECT OF PL-480 RICE TRANSITING THAILAND FOR AIR
DELIVERY TO CAMBODIA. WE REMINDED KRIANGSAK OF DIFFI-
CULTIES LAST TIME PL-480 RICE SHIPMENT ARRIVED AT
SATTAHIP, AND SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS DURING WHICH
CONCERNED THAI MINISTRIES AND SUPREME COMMAND HAD AGREED
TO TREAT SMALL QUANTITIES AS IN-TRANSIT. WE THEN
INFORMED KRIANGSAK THAT SHIPMENT OF APPROXIMATELY 600

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METRIC TONS PL-480 RICE DUE IN THAILAND WITHIN FEW DAYS.

(DESPITE OUR URGENT PLEAS, INCIDENTALLY, WE HAD
LEARNED OF THIS SHIPMENT ONLY THE SAME MORNING.)

2. KRIANGSAK REACTED NEGATIVELY. HE SAID THAT WHEREAS,
IN CASE OF ADDITIONAL TAIL NUMBERS FOR BIRD AIR MATTER
LAY WITHIN HIS POWER TO HANDLE ALONE, PL-480 RICE WAS
ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PROBLEM. SEVERAL MINISTRIES WERE
INVOLVED AND WOULD HAVE TO AGREE, AND THEY WERE AGAINST
SUCH SHIPMENTS. HE DOUBTED SHIPMENT COULD BE ADMITTED.

3. WE POINTED OUT THAT FOLLOWING DIFFICULTIES IN PREVIOUS
CASE, WE HAD CONSULTED ALL INVOLVED MINISTRIES. MINISTRY
OF COMMERCE HAD SAID IT WOULD TREAT SUCH RICE AS IN-
TRANSIT. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAD DISCLAIMED INTEREST.
IT THUS APPEARED THAT ALL BARRIERS HAD BEEN REMOVED.

4. KRIANGSAK DISAGREED WITH OUR DESCRIPTION OF POSITIONS
OF OTHER MINISTRIES. HE SAID HE HAD HAD TO FORCE MATTER
THROUGH CABINET ON PREVIOUS OCCASION BY ARGUING THAT
SHIPMENT WAS ONE TIME OPERATION AND RICE WAS ALREADY AT
PORT. HE HAD THUS OVERCOME RESISTANCE OF OTHER MINISTRIES,
BUT THIS HAD NOT ALTERED THEIR BASIC OPPOSITION, WHICH
WAS MATTER OF RECORD, DESPITE WHAT THEY MIGHT SUBSEQUENTLY
HAVE SAID ORALLY TO EMBASSY.

5. WE URGED KRIANGSAK TO IDENTIFY CENTERS OF OPPOSITION
SO THAT WE COULD DEAL WITH THEM, BUT HE DECLINED TO DO
SO FOR TWO REASONS:

A) HE WISHED TO CONFIRM HIS RECOLLECTION OF
POSITIONS TAKEN BY OTHERS FROM HIS OWN RECORDS, AND

B) IN ANY CASE, HE DID NOT BELIEVE IT WAS USEFUL FOR
EMBASSY TO MAKE MULTIPLE APPROACHES TO VARIOUS ELEMENTS
OF RTG. EMBASSY SHOULD DEAL WITH SINGLE AUTHORITY FOR
ANY GIVEN QUESTION. NONETHELESS, HE FINALLY SAID THAT
SINCE MATTER INVOLVED CABINET, ONLY PRIME MINISTER COULD
USEFULLY BE APPROACHED.

6. WE LEFT MATTER WITH AGREEMENT THAT WE WOULD CALL
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KRIANGSAK AGAIN FOLLOWING DAY, FEBRUARY 11, AFTER HE
HAD CHECKED HIS RECORDS. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN ABLE TO
REACH HIM AND MAY NOT SUCCEED IN DOING SO BEFORE DAY IS
OUT.

7. LONG AND SHORT OF IT IS THAT WE WILL HAVE REAL
PROBLEMS RECEIVING AND PROCESSING FOR AIR LIFT THE RICE
DUE AT SATTAHIP WITHIN NEXT DAY OR TWO ABOARD M/V NAM

VIET. BE ASSURED WE WILL DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO
STRAIGHTEN THIS OUT BUT WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF FACT THAT,
IN PRESENT CONFUSED THAI POLITICAL SITUATION, THIS MAY
AT BEST TAKE SOME TIME.
KINTNER

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